

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

Claims 1-18 (cancelled)

19. (new) A calibrator for absolute quantitation of target RNA by RT-PCR comprising a single cRNA species synthesized by reverse transcription from a synthetic oligonucleotide and quantitatively assayed by an independent method, wherein said synthetic oligonucleotide comprises an amplicon and a promoter sequence located 3' relative to the amplicon.

20. (new) The calibrator of claim 19, wherein said promoter sequence is a bacteriophage promoter sequence.

21. (new) The calibrator of claim 20, wherein said promoter sequence is a T7 promoter sequence.

22. (new) The calibrator of claim 21, wherein said T7 promoter sequence is CCTATAGTGAGTCGTATTA (SEQ ID NO:1).

23. (new) The calibrator of claim 19, wherein said synthetic oligonucleotide further comprises a flanking sequence of 2-20 nucleotides adjacent to the amplicon.

24. (new) The calibrator of claim 23, wherein said flanking sequence is 5' and adjacent to the amplicon.

25. (new) The calibrator of claim 23, wherein said flanking sequence is 3' and adjacent to the amplicon.

26. (new) The calibrator of claim 23, wherein synthetic oligonucleotide further comprises both a 5' and a 3' flanking sequence adjacent to the amplicon.

27. (new) The calibrator of claim 23, wherein said flanking sequence is 8 to 12 nucleotides in length.

28. (new) The calibrator of claim 19, wherein said amplicon is 30 to 70 nucleotides in length.

29. (new) The calibrator of claim 28, wherein said amplicon is 40 to 60 nucleotides in length.

30. (new) The calibrator of claim 19, wherein said synthetic oligonucleotide is 60 to 140 nucleotides in length.

31. (new) The calibrator of claim 30, wherein said synthetic oligonucleotide is 70 to 130 nucleotides in length.

32. (new) The calibrator of claim 31, wherein said synthetic oligonucleotide is 80 to 120 nucleotides in length.

33. (new) The calibrator of claim 32, wherein said synthetic oligonucleotide is 90 to 110 nucleotides in length.

34. (new) The calibrator of claim 19, further comprising heterologous RNA.

35. (new) The calibrator of claim 34, wherein said heterologous RNA is total RNA.

36. (new) The calibrator of claim 35, wherein said heterologous RNA is yeast total RNA.

37. (new) The calibrator of claim 19, wherein said cRNA species is MGB.

38. (new) The calibrator of claim 19, wherein said cRNA is assayed quantitatively by measuring its absorbance at 260 nm.

39. (new) A kit comprising the calibrator of claim 19.

40. (new) The kit of claim 39 comprising more than one aliquot of said cRNA species.

41. (new) The kit of claim 40, wherein each said aliquot comprises successive serial 1:10 dilutions of said cRNA species.